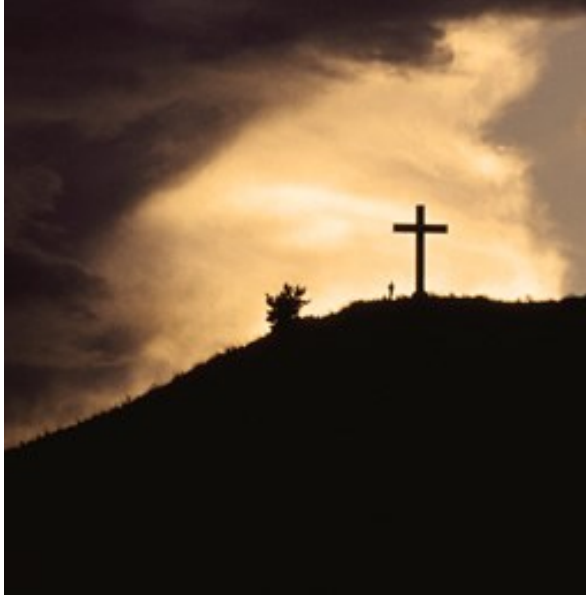


Lancaster Road
United Reformed Church



April 2026
Newsletter

www.lrurc.org.uk

April is upon us. I must admit that the time between writing my minister's letters seems to get shorter and shorter. I sometimes sit and wonder what I can write but God always gives me something which I am always so grateful for.

I was looking out of the dining room window at our lawn and thought how lush it was. Then I was reminded that it hadn't looked quite like that last year when we decided to take out every single dandelion from the lawn. I asked Stuart how many he thought we had removed and he said it had to be in the hundreds. It took 10 days of hard work to finally remove them all. The lovely Janice Lockett had lent us a weeding tool which removed the weed and more importantly it's root system and this made the work considerably easier than if we were on our hands and knees taking the weeds out by hand. I wished that Janice could see the lawn now. Her advice was taken and we are now benefitting from her wisdom. Thinking back to the lawn last year it was full of holes, in fact it looked like a 500 hole golf course and the grass was very patchy. The squirrels had an easier job burying their finds – we'd done their work for them! However, whilst reflecting, it came to me that God often works in this way. The weeds in our lives have to be pulled out, roots and all. This can be painful and not a pleasant experience but one that is absolutely necessary if we are to reach our potential in God's plan for us.

Hebrew 12:6, "For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son whom he receives." It is out of love that the Lord disciplines us and when we listen and lean on his will and understanding we do indeed flourish.

So, what does the next year have in store for our lawn? Well, that depends on the gardener's (Stuart's) plans. It certainly isn't perfect as it has a few bumps and dips still in it but rather like us, it's a work in progress. God is the gardener of our lives let him work out his plans so that with each year we become more as he intended us to be.

Have a very blessed April.
God bless,
Ruth

Catriona's sermon

It can be easy to forget when we hear our bible readings what it must have been like for the first people to read or to hear those letters. For that's what they were, letters. Today they are bundled up with the other books of the New Testament and with the Old Testament. Yes, we know in our heads they are letters – it's part of the title. Letter to the Romans, or Epistle to the Romans in some translations. But do we really think of them as real letters that would have been greeted with excitement by the Christian community in Rome?

For many years my mother wrote to my brothers and me every Sunday night. When I was a student, she first started doing it by hand with a copy for me and copy for my older brother; each with our own personal bits of news. She very quickly moved on to an Amstrad word processor, then by the mid-90s a computer and eventually to emailing it, but for a long time on a Tuesday I would look eagerly for the blue pre-stamped envelope that was my father's contribution to the communication process. An envelope that contained news, gossip and advice from home. I expect there are some of you who also treasure letters whether paper, or by text or messages.

Imagine then what it was like in a period when travel was hard and dangerous and letters could take months to arrive, to have a letter like this. The news of it must have swept the community. They would all want to know what was in the letter.

The Christians in Rome who received that letter weren't a community which was founded by Paul. He did know some of them though – Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned later on in the letter and are names that crop up a few times in the New Testament. They were with Paul for about 18 months in Corinth where he was probably writing from, and were probably part of founders of the church there, but they came from Rome and were back there by the time this letter was written. No doubt they would have spoken a lot about their work with Paul so this would have been a familiar and well-respected name.

The church in Rome was long established by the time of this letter. Rather what they probably considered long established. The letter was written about 57-58 Common Era, so nearly 30 years after the crucifixion. We don't know who founded the Christian community there, but it may well have been by Jews who were part of that multi-national crowd at Pentecost who heard the disciples speaking in many tongues. Or it may have been founded by other disciples fulfilling Jesus' great commission to make disciples of all nations. Or it might have been a combination of these. Those who had heard the Word would have been eager to learn more, to be in contact with fellow believers around the known world.

It was a divided community though – it was made up of Jews and gentiles. Rome of course was a gentile city, but it had had a large Jewish community. The Jews were thrown out of Rome by the Emperor Claudius about eight years before this letter. That's probably the time that Priscila and Aquila went to Corinth. They were allowed back by the next emperor, Nero, but the Christian community in Rome was a completely gentile community for some years. People who came to Christ without the background of Jewish teaching. They had grown up believing in many gods and had set those beliefs aside. This led to the question that we see from time and time coming up in the history of the early church – were those who followed Jesus' teachings also to follow all the other laws and practices relating to being a Jew. Was this the next stage of being Jewish? Were they to follow all Jewish practices; some of them; or none of them? They were still trying to come to an understanding of what was it was to be a follower of Christ; a Christian. A struggle many Christians today may also have. What does it mean to us to follow Christ?

Paul's letter to them was intended to help guide these two established Christian communities into a better understanding and come to unity. I'm sure it was welcomed. Here was guidance from someone they knew of, who could be trusted to help them on the right path.

What Paul reminded them was that they were looking at things the wrong way. What is important is God's grace. God's forgiveness is always more important than whether a law has been broken. He reminds them, and us,

that God's grace is abundant. There may be much sin in the world but one act of righteousness, Jesus dying to take punishment for our sins is far more important than a multitude of broken laws. It gave those people in Rome who read that letter, and it gives us now, and everyone who came before us and will come after us a lifetime of forgiveness.

You'll be familiar with the image of Justice as a blind woman holding scales to demonstrate fairness. Life must be in balance. If there is wrongdoing, something must balance against the wrong doing to put it right. That is justice. What Paul gives us is not a message that Jesus brings justice. That sounds shocking at first. You may say, but surely that's part of what being Christian is? - justice is important? But Paul is saying that right and wrong are not being balanced off. He tells them – "where sin increased grace abounded all the more". It's like the word game small children play when they want to be the winner – "mine's better than yours", "Well mine's better than yours to infinity". "then mine's infinity plus one". That's what Jesus' grace is to us – infinity plus one. In those scales of justice, Jesus' one act of righteousness always outweighs the trespass. The scales will always tip down so that the grace from God outweighs anything we can do. As the Message bible translation puts it "When it's sin versus grace, grace always wins hands down"

That grace of forgiveness is given freely. We do not have to pay the price of justice. It has already been paid for us and will give everyone eternal life. Not just the Jews following the law; not just those who have no experience of the Jewish law; not those who are trying to find a compromise between the old and the new. As Paul says that "one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all".

What did that message mean to those early Christians? I expect it could have been difficult for some of those who heard that message. If you have spent your whole life living one way it can be very hard to change direction. Many of us very conventional and don't like much change. For others it will have been liberating to know that God's love is not limited so that a structure of laws must be observed. Even so, we know that they did not reject the message that God had given to their predecessors. If they had,

we would not have those books that now make up the Old Testament. We would only know the Psalms as the books of another faith, rather than our own. We would not have that wonderful Psalm 32 which we heard earlier. A Psalm which speaks so personally. It's not a great hymn of praise to a mass of people it's one that talks to us as individuals which understands how each of us feels when we know that we have done wrong, and what it means to be forgiven.

When we know that we have not done the right thing, or that we have "left undone those things which we ought to have done" we feel a sense of shame. The person who wrote that Psalm knew that sense of shame so well. They had clearly felt it to describe it like this – "my bones wasted away", "my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer". You can sense the way they want to curl up, shy away from the guilt. But that writer also knew how joyous it is to acknowledge that sin, to ask for forgiveness and TO RECEIVE IT. "I acknowledged my sin to you". This is so important to them that they start the Psalm with those words – "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven".

The Psalm is in two voices – one, the person who has sinned, confessed, and knows the release and joy of forgiveness. The other is God's voice. God tells us that he is not abandoning us, leaving us alone to feel that shame, of knowing that we have done wrong. He will show us the way; He will instruct us, He will teach us and He will counsel us. And He does just that – through the teaching of Jesus, through His presence as the Spirit. But in the end, He reminds us that we have free will. He shows us the way, but we're not like a horse or mule that has no choice but to follow the path because that is how they are taken by the reins. The way is there – Jesus tells us He is the Way. Our choice, just like the choice of those early Christians in Rome is to follow that way and to accept the freely given grace that is offered to each of us.

Amen.

Worshipping in Madeira

Chris and I spent the last week of February in Madeira. On Sunday 22nd we decided that we would like to visit Holy Trinity Church in Funchal for morning worship. This church is known by everyone as 'The English Church' as it's the only Anglican church on the island. It has been in existence since 1822. This wasn't our first visit to the church – we'd attended the Sunday service on our first visit to the island back in 1990!

The service followed the usual Anglican format for morning service with Eucharist

(Communion). Being the first Sunday of Lent, it followed the Lectionary readings on the theme of 'temptation' (Genesis 3, Matthew 4 and Romans 5). The worship was greatly enhanced by the beautiful baritone voice of Rhys, who sang before and after the service with soprano, Meryl. He also sang the aria 'It Is Enough' from Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' between the Gospel reading and the sermon during a period of reflection. I must confess I didn't reflect as much as I should have done because I enjoyed listening to his beautiful singing so much!

The church is part of the Anglican Diocese of Europe and is currently in vacancy. The interregnum is being covered by Rev Annie, who led the service we attended. The church has an outreach of weekday concerts in the garden which anyone is welcome to attend. They are quite eclectic – anything from Beethoven to the Beatles! The temperate climate means that the after-church coffee can take place in the beautiful church garden most weeks of the year too. As well as the usual hot drinks, cake and biscuits we enjoyed a small glass of Madeira wine – it would have been rude not to!

It wasn't our first visit and I hope it won't be our last!

Laura

April

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
		1st Bible Study 9.45 Food Hub 10.00-12pm Prayer at Home 9.30pm	2nd Maundy Thursday Communion Bush Hill Park 7.30pm
6th No Toddlers Group to Spring Harvest	7th No Bible Study	8th No Food Hub 10.00-12pm Prayer at Home 9.30pm	9th
13th Toddlers 9.30 to 11.30 Elders Meeting 7pm Church Lounge	14th	15th Bible Study 9.45 Food Hub 10.00-12pm Prayer at Home 9.30pm	16th
20th Toddlers 9.30to 11.30 Ministers Spring school	21st Bible Study Church Lounge 8.15pm	22nd Food Hub 10.00-12pm Prayer at Home 9.30pm	23rd
27th Toddlers 9.30to 11.30	28th	29th Bible Study 9.45 Food Hub 10.00-12pm Hope Explored 6pm Prayer at Home 9.30pm	30th

2026

	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
y	3rd No Shoppers Coffee Morning. Good Friday Worship @ 10.30am St Andrews Church	4th	5th Easter Communion 11.15am Revd Martin Legg
	10th No Shoppers Coffee	11th	12th Morning service 11.15am Revd Ruth—All Age No Evening service
	17th Shoppers Coffee in the church With lunch 10-2pm	18th	19th Morning service 11.15am Laura Marlow
	24th Shoppers Coffee in the church 10-12	25th	26th Morning Service 11.15am Jeevan Rajkiran
	1stMay Shoppers Coffee in the church With lunch 10-2pm	2nd	3rd Morning Communion 11.15am Terry Silvey

The weekend of 22nd February 2026 we were visited by Catriona Wheeler who is this years United Reformed Church's Moderator of the General Assembly. We had a celebration service at Trinity Church Enfield, with our URC/Methodist friends who gave us a very warm welcome. The service had different church representatives taking part and the singing was wonderful. The offertory amounted to £420.74 and was donated to CAP Enfield, who were very grateful.

It would have been a tall order for Catriona to visit all the churches in Enfield so each of the 8 churches represented were asked to put together an A2 poster to show what their church did and how they reach out to their communities. Many people said how lovely it was to see Trinity Church full and to be able to worship together.

Ruth



If you like knitting would you consider helping us to build us a stock of little angels to give out to all those who visit The Nativity Festival that will be held at Lancaster Road URC (the same weekend the Christmas Tree Festival at Christ Church URC and the Enfield Light Parade on the 5th and 6th December). If you are able to knit, please hand your little angels to Ruth to look after until December. Many thanks, Ruth

What you will need.

Some wool (in any yarn or colour)
Knitting needles (between size 10-8 (that's 3.25mm and 4mm))
Darning needle (like a big sewing needle)
Small amount of stuffing

The angels have been designed to be as simple and as flexible as possible so everyone from a beginner to a more advanced knitter can have a go. Feel free to adapt the pattern if you want by adding in different colours or making a larger angel.

If you want a place to start we have used size 9 needles with double yarn to knit some of ours.

You will need a basic knowledge of knit and purl to make these angels but don't let that stop you if you haven't done it before. Find someone who can teach you and ask them to help you learn a new skill.

And most of all have fun.

The Pattern

Angel - Body

Cast on 48 sts

1. Knit row
2. Purl row
3. K2TOG, K10*, repeat until end
4. Purl row
5. Knit row
6. P2TOG, P9*, repeat until end
7. Knit row
8. Purl row
9. K2TOG, K8*, repeat until end
10. Purl row
11. Knit row
12. P2TOG, P7*, repeat until end
13. Knit Row
14. Purl Row
15. K2TOG, K6*, repeat until end
16. Purl row
17. Knit row

18. P2TOG, P5*, repeat until end
19. Knit row
20. Purl row
21. K2TOG, K4*, repeat until end - 20 sts
22. Purl row
23. Knit row
24. Purl row
25. Knit row
26. Purl row
27. Knit row

Pattern is continued on the other side.



This angel is knitted in sparkly cream, with sparkly mohair wings.



CHRISTMAS ANGEL
www.christmasangel.net

At this point, you can change your colour to create the face if you want.

28. Purl row
29. knit row
30. Purl row
31. Knit row
32. Purl row
33. Knit row
34. Purl row
35. K2TOG - repeat until end
36. Purl row
37. Knit row
38. P2TOG - repeat until end

Using a darning needle, thread the end of the yarn through the stitches and tighten to create the top of the head. Turn the angel inside out and sew up the head and the body. Around the neck, take a small amount of stuffing and place at the top of the head, then thread some yarn between stitches and pull loosely together.

Angel - Wings

Option 1

Cast on 27 sts

1. Knit row
2. Knit row
3. Decrease at each end (Knit)
4. Knit
5. Knit 12 rows, decrease at each end
cast off

Option 2 (more advanced)

The wings are knitted in short rows, with the yarn wrapped around the last stitch in the middle of each ridge. To complete this you need to bring your yarn forward, slip the stitch over purlwise, take the yarn back again, replace the slipped stitch, bring the yarn forward again and turn the work.

w&t = wrap & turn

Cast on 9 sts

1. K8, w&t, K8
2. K6, w&t, K6
3. K4, w&t, K4
4. K2, w&t, K2
5. K4, w&t, K4
6. K6, w&t, K6

Repeat these 6 rows, 4-5 times as necessary. Sew wings to the body.



Wings as they should look using option 2.

BB News

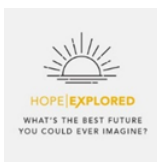
On Sunday 22nd March the Battalion held their annual Church Parade and Explore event. After the Parade and service, the Boys and Girls had lunch which consisted of hot dogs and chips, always a favourite which was then followed by activities including crafts, bouncy castle, mini golf, axe throw, giant tetris, four in a row, basketball throw, duel and escape room. There was also a games van providing popular video games for the older Boys and Girls.



Unfortunately, the activity afternoon in February had to be cancelled. Since Christmas we have made Marshmallow Robots, been adventurous with Sparklers, taken part in fund raising for Young Minds and learnt a worship song using Makaton. The Anchors created their own emojis and Juniors took part in an obstacle course when blindfolded, we had a chocolate week where the Boys and Girls decided which was their favourite chocolate bar and looked at incredible inventors. Juniors did some activities around the story of the Prodigal Son while the Anchors created the life cycle of a frog using fruit! For Mothers Day they made a print using hand prints and the word love. I am sure that the mums were very impressed. Our final week before the Easter Break, they took part in an Easter Trail which followed the Easter Story from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. They also created a Tear Art picture which were very impressive.



Finally thank you to everyone who have contributed towards Max's trip to Mexico. He has almost reached his target and I know that he will be contacting people to say thank you personally. At some time he will come along and tell us all about his trip.



Hope Explored

Hope Explored is a three-session series about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is based on readings from Luke's Gospel. There are three themes explored in the three sessions. Hope, Peace, and Purpose. Hope explored is for anyone who wants to learn about the Christian faith, or, who wants to learn more about Jesus. We will be producing some flyers and invitations. The sessions begin on **Wednesday 29th April at 6.00pm in the church lounge.**

Each session will be about 2 hours and will include a light meal at the start. Offers of food would be gratefully received. For more information, please speak to Ruth or Martin.

Christian Aid Week

This year's Christian Aid Week takes place between 10-16th May. As we've done during and since covid, we'll be delivering envelopes to be returned to the church on Saturday 16th May. If you're able to assist in delivering some envelopes to roads near the church during this week then please let me know. I'll be making my usual appeal in the notices in the latter part of April and beginning of May. More information on Christian Aid's work and this year's theme in next month's newsletter.

Thanks in advance for your support.

Laura

LyCiG Prayer (Leading your Church into Growth)

God of Mission Who alone brings growth to your Church,
Send your Holy Spirit to give Vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions,
And power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
In spiritual commitment to you,
And in service to our local community,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Our Church Mission Statement.

"As a Church our desire is to worship God and grow as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. To show and nurture love, joy, peace and justice in our fellowship, community and to all people through the power of the Holy Spirit."



Spring Coffee Morning

with stalls

Saturday 18th April
10:30am - 12:30pm
Enfield Baptist Church,
Cecil Road, EN2 6TG

Invite family and friends, enjoy delicious
cakes and browse our stalls.

If you have any new items, cakes or
preservatives you would like to donate,
please bring them on the morning.



Duty Elders for April 2026

Date	11.15 a.m.	Notes	6:30 p.m.	Notes
5th	Beryl/Chris	<i>Easter Sunday (Holy Communion)</i>		
12th	Clare	<i>All Age Service</i>		
19th	Graham			
26th	Chris			
3rd April	Clare/Graham	Holy Communion		

Elders marked in **BOLD** are responsible for reading notices at that service. Please let them have any notices 10 minutes before the start of the service.

Elders on duty at a **Communion Service** must ensure that the person presiding at Communion informs the congregation of the Charity/Organisation receiving the Communion Offertory and that the collection plate is on the Communion Table.

Thank you

Flower Rota April

April 5 -----

12 EASTER

19 Laura and Chris Marlow for their Wedding Anniversary

26 -----

Youth & Childrens work Activities In the Church Hall Armfield Road.

Toddler group – 0-4 yrs

Monday morning 9.30 – 11.30am. Just come along, refreshments provided.

Boys Brigade and Girls Association (boys and girls) – 5 – 11 yrs.

Monday 6.15 – 7.30 pm.

Contact Vivienne Legg 1stenfieldbb@gmail.com

5th Enfield Rainbows - Girls 4-7y rs -

Thursday 5.30pm - 6.30pm :

Contact Sumita Biswas 5thenfieldrainbows@gmail.com

5th Enfield Brownies - Girls 7-10 yrs -

Thursday 6.15pm - 7.45pm

Contact Mary Dawson 5enfieldbrownies@googlemail.com

5th Enfield Guides - Girls 10-14 yrs

Thursday 7pm—8.30pm

Contact Allison Duggal guides5thenfield@hotmail.co.uk

5th Enfield Rangers - Girls 14-18 yrs

Thursday 7pm—8.30pm

Contact Nansi Ellis guides5thenfield@hotmail.co.uk

YPCF – 5 -11 yrs **Sunday 11.15 – 12.15 (in the church).**

Contact Chris Marlow ypcf@lrurc.org.uk

Who to Contact

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